

WISCONSIN STATE FAIR PARK

POSITION OPENING **Director of Vendor Services**

POSITION SUMMARY

Under the general direction of the Chief Programs Officer of Wisconsin State Fair Park (WSFP), this position serves as the head of the Vendor Services department.

In conjunction with the Chief Programs Officer, the Director of Vendor Services oversees all physical programming and layout of the Fair Park during the annual Wisconsin State Fair (WSF) and Harvest Fair (HF). The Director of Vendor Services and their team is responsible for the selection, contracting and execution of commercial, food & beverage and attraction vendors, as well as working with a variety of other departments to facilitate placement, layout, function and utility needs of service providers, sponsors, agriculture and education exhibits, rest areas, and entertainment. In addition to ensuring high quality vendors and proper utilization of space, this position is responsible for seeking out improvements to programming and enhancing the use of the physical Fair Park for both the annual Fair and non-Fair use.

Along with directly managing the Vendor Manager and Vendor Account Manager, this position is responsible for establishing and maintaining department procedures, as well as ensuring compliance with all WSFP contracting and sales reporting processes. This includes oversight of department communications, while maintaining excellence in customer service, vendor, and supplier relations, as well as seeking out and building relationships with new partners.

EMPLOYMENT TYPE

Full-Time, permanent position in the unclassified service of the State of Wisconsin.

COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

Salary is commensurate with experience and qualifications in alignment with the State of Wisconsin's Compensation Plan for new hires, promotions, and transfers. As an unclassified position, this position best aligns to the pay range 81-02 for salary purposes. Includes comprehensive fringe benefits package, including pension, health insurance, and paid time off.

WHO CAN APPLY

This position is open to all qualified **internal** candidates who meet the outlined criteria.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

Fair Park Layout, Programming, and Function for Wisconsin State Fair and Harvest Fair

- Evaluate, analyze and identify areas of the Fair Park for changes in programming and physical improvements, while maintaining a consistent balance between food, beverage, commercial shopping, informational and interactive opportunities, rest areas and attractions
- Assist CPO in communicating all layout, programming and traffic flow determinations between departments
- Research, analyze and adjust vendor rates as needed. This includes commission rates, flat-rate front-foot/guarantee space rates, vendor rented Fair-owned buildings, storage space, parking permit and stock storage rates

- Ensure proper electrical, water, sanitary, and waste disposal throughout the Park by working with the WSFP Facilities department in collaboration with the Vendor Services Team
- With the Vendor Services Team, maintain communication with external agencies on a continual basis to ensure the Fair Park is compliant and stays up to date regarding various codes and regulations
- In conjunction with the CPO and Vendor Services Team, oversee the layout, marking and placement of all outside food & beverage, commercial and attraction vendors, sponsors, vendor and supplier stock trucks and storage for WSF, HF and a variety of other non-Fair events
- In conjunction with the Business Office and the Vendor Services Team, support vendor reporting during the WSF Fair, HF and other non-Fair events.
- Assist CPO in maintaining and updating master Fair Park layout maps for WSF including all outside vendors, sponsors, garbage, recycling, grease barrels/tanks, vendor and supplier stock trucks and interior storage
- Determine locations of fencing and access gates in vendor programmed areas and work with internal and external personnel to order and complete
- Create and implement park-wide setup and teardown procedures for pre- and post-fair and communicate to the necessary internal departments as well as communication and direction of vendors
- Participate in master planning and park improvement plans as requested
- Participate in and/or effectively recommend program planning and development changes necessary to meet state requirements and policy direction by the WSFP Board of Directors
- Oversee and execute rental and storage agreements for vendor operated, Fair owned facilities, and ensure proper execution

Vendor Buildings, Projects & Development – Assist the Chief Programs Officer in the following:

- Proper execution of ground leases for all vendor owned buildings and structures
- Managing ownership transfers of vendor owned buildings ensuring proper protocol is followed as outlined in the vendor ground lease
- With the assistance from the WSFP Facilities department, maintain the WSFP facilities maintenance, design and construction guide, and ensure vendor owned buildings are held to the standards outlined within
- In conjunction with the WSFP Facilities department, oversee vendor renovations, capital improvements, and new construction projects

Vendor & Supplier Operations

- Work in tandem with the Vendor Services Team and WSFP Business Office to continually evaluate, improve, and enhance the vendor sales reporting processes for both the WSF and non-Fair events, ensuring both internal and vendor compliance with current processes
- Assist CPO in oversight of both Fair and non-Fair alcohol service at WSFP
- Manage relationships with existing vendors, suppliers and contractors; oversee, along with the Procurement Manager, the RFP or RFB process related to securing these relationships

Administration, Management and Supervision of Vendor Services Department

- Manage the contracting and execution of vendor services agreements for the Fair and non-Fair events
- In conjunction with the CPO, establish long- and short-range objectives for department through analysis, research, planning, development, and implementation of necessary policies and procedures
- Provide effective leadership, training, and guidance to staff to help them achieve goals; review operations to ensure goals are met or determine if changes are necessary
- Conduct annual performance evaluations with staff and provide periodic feedback and support when needed

- Manage department budget and work with leadership team on budget forecasting and long-term fiscal responsibility within the department
- Recruit, interview, and recommend candidates for hire and train necessary year-round staff
- Recommend the promotion, discipline and/or termination of subordinate staff
- Participate in the review of any current agency-wide policies and procedures and in the planning, development and implementation of any new policies and procedures
- Keep on top of industry trends related to the department

QUALIFICATIONS

- Bachelor's degree from an accredited college/university; or commensurate experience and training, preferred
- Event industry experience, strongly preferred
- Extensive knowledge of department operations, rules, regulations, policies, and procedures as they are associated with this position
- Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with managers, supervisors, staff, vendor partners and external contacts
- Effective leadership skills
- Exceptional organizational skills and the ability to handle multiple tasks in detail simultaneously
- Strong analytical and data-driven mindset
- Extensive knowledge of and skill in using computers and Microsoft software such as Word, Excel, Access, Outlook, Power Point and Internet Explorer and ability to adapt to changes in said technology
- Experience with AutoCAD and Momentus, preferred
- Ability to maintain confidentiality of sensitive vendor information
- Effective written and oral communication skills
- Highly developed customer service skills and creative problem-solving abilities
- Ability to cope under pressure and extreme time constraints

SPECIAL NOTES

Candidate must be able to work extended hours, including nights and weekends, at times leading up to and during the Wisconsin State Fair. The candidate is required to work all 11 days of the annual Wisconsin State Fair; for 2025 these dates are July 31 – August 10. Prior to appointment to this position, the candidate will be subject to a comprehensive criminal background check.

TO APPLY

Please to submit your resume and cover letter via email to HR at hr@wistatefair.com and include "Director of Vendor Services" in the subject line. Application materials must be received by **Monday, December 2, 2024**. The most qualified applicants will be invited to interview.

COMPANY DESCRIPTION

Wisconsin State Fair Park is a year-round entertainment venue hosting activities, events, meetings and more throughout the four seasons. Home to the Exposition Center, Tommy G. Thompson Youth Center, the Milwaukee Mile Speedway, Products Pavilion and many other facilities, hundreds of events are held at the Fair Park each year. Perhaps the most notable and certainly the signature event, the Wisconsin State Fair, welcomes more than one million Fairgoers over 11 summer days. Visit www.wistatefair.com for more information.

Wisconsin State Fair Park's central location within the largest metro area in Wisconsin makes it a desirable place to work, live and play. As a world-class city, Milwaukee and the Greater Milwaukee Area are full of opportunities galore for living, working and playing. Visit www.discovermilwaukee.com for more information.

Wisconsin State Fair Park is an Equal Opportunity Employer.